

Are You Ready?

Managing Transportation Resources
Through the Y2K Weekend



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**



PUBLIC TECHNOLOGY, INC.

Dear Official:

One year ago, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) with Public Technology, Inc. (PTI) as one of the Partners for ITS Y2K, hosted the July 27, 1998 Awareness to Action Summit. The summit brought together more than 150 transportation officials to develop a plan to address and solve the Y2K problem.

Since that Summit, DOT and PTI have continued to collaborate on our Y2K outreach efforts. Much of the year has been devoted to working with local governments and states to make sure that our nation's transportation systems will be safe and operational on January 1, 2000. This report, based on the valuable input of 20 local and state officials during a full day exercise, is designed to help governments manage their resources during the Year 2000 (Y2K) weekend and build public confidence as communities nationwide prepare for Y2K. The participants were selected because of their knowledge and expertise, and their ability to mobilize resources and stimulate change in their organizations and with strategic partners.

The three scenarios described in the report can be used during meetings, workshops, and other presentations as a way to encourage participants to discuss the current state of their contingency plans and improve valuable lines of communication across agency and jurisdictional boundaries. The scenarios are designed to help localities, regions and states develop contingency plans, and enable agencies to make sure these plans include appropriate lines of communication and meet a wide range of needs. The report is designed to help public agencies understand the importance of using their staff and resources in an effective manner to ensure that the transportation system is properly managed and operated during the Y2K transition weekend period.

We also encourage you to use resources that we have made available to government officials through a national Y2K readiness campaign, Y2K & YOU. You'll find contingency planning documents, case studies, information, and links to help you in your Y2K efforts on the Y2K & YOU Website at <http://pti.nw.dc.us/y2k>. Additional resources and information are available at <http://www.y2ktransport.dot.gov/>.

Good luck in managing your Y2K rollover!

Mortimer L. Downey

Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation

Costis Toregas



President
Public Technology, Inc.

Table of Contents

- I. The Challenge – Planning for the Y2K Weekend 1
- II. Overview of Exercise: Managing the Y2K Weekend 3
- III. Triggering Events 5
- IV. Identifying Y2K Vulnerabilities 9
- V. Actions to Address Vulnerabilities 13
- VI. Building Public Confidence. 15
- VII. Putting It All Together: A Y2K Weekend Checklist 19
- For Further Information 21

I. The Challenge: Planning for the Y2K Weekend

With the year 2000 approaching, the transportation community has become very familiar with the year 2000 problem, or "Y2K." Computer systems around the world have been tested and many Y2K-related problems have been identified and repaired.

Despite these efforts, significant uncertainty remains regarding how computers and transportation systems will behave on January 1, 2000. Although many jurisdictions and private sector companies will have addressed their Y2K issues, others simply will not be prepared. Moreover, there are inherent unknowns that will create ambiguities regarding whether and to what extent problems may be caused by Y2K.

The public is also reacting with uncertainty. Some believe that Y2K will cause serious disruptions and are hoarding food, gasoline, and other supplies. Some wonder about safety of the transportation system is unsafe and will not fly or ride public transit in the early days of the new year.

Local and state governments have a significant role in managing the changeover. As operators of much of the nation's surface transportation system, they are in a key position to plan for Y2K-related problems and to identify and address problems that may occur. They also are in the best position to inform and assure the public that transportation systems will be safe and reliable after the new year.

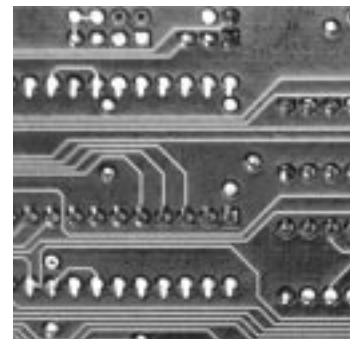
The Administration has made solving the Y2K challenge a top priority. To help ensure safe and reliable transportation after January 1, 2000, the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) has been working closely with its partners in the transportation community to promote awareness of Y2K-related problems. U.S. DOT has facilitated a national Y2K transportation dialogue and has provided assistance wherever possible to address Y2K concerns.

For example, in July 1998, U.S. DOT sponsored the Intelligent Transportation Systems Y2K Summit, which brought together more than 150 transportation professionals to identify key issues and develop a plan for addressing and solving the Y2K problem. Following that Summit, U.S. DOT published Steps for Action: Getting Intelligent Transportation Systems Ready for the Year 2000. This brochure served as a tool to help map out Y2K problem solving between July 1998 and January 1, 2000.

Now that 2000 is almost upon us, the transportation community must have contingency plans ready and tested if Y2K problem solving efforts fail, unforeseen problems develop, or problems in other sectors of the economy, such as electric utilities, that impact the transportation system. It also is critical that local and state governments build public confidence about Y2K preparedness within their communities.

"The Y2K millennium crisis is not an IT problem; It's a management problem."

*John Koskinen, Chair
President's Council on Y2K
Conversion*



II. Overview of Exercise: Managing the Y2K Weekend

On May 12, 1999, U.S. DOT and its partner, Public Technology, Inc.(PTI), invited twenty local and state government officials to participate in an all day exercise regarding Y2K contingency planning and building public confidence regarding Y2K preparedness. The participants represented leaders in a wide range of transportation-related organizations selected because of their ability to direct action, mobilize resources, and stimulate change within their respective organizations and with their strategic partners.

The exercise began by asking the participants to identify the status of their Y2K planning and to assess the state of their readiness. Most participants stated that they had completed, or nearly completed, the five step process for Y2K remediation.

Despite this preparedness, there was significant uncertainty expressed regarding how Y2K will affect transportation operations. Many participants indicated that they were in various stages of preparing contingency plans, while others said they were just beginning. Although some participants expressed confidence, most indicated that despite their best assessment, repair, and planning efforts, there remains uncertainty regarding whether, and to what extent, they will be affected by Y2K.

After providing these initial comments and assessments, participants were given a set of assumptions about a fictional city. This fictional city served as the backdrop or context against which participants were asked to evaluate and respond to various scenarios before, during, and after the Y2K weekend.

Fictional City Attributes

- Multi-jurisdictional environment (state/county/city/MPO/authority);
- Major metropolitan area in the mid-Atlantic;
- Bus/rail transit system serves central city and close-in suburbs;
- Active intermodal port with significant container volume;
- Traffic control center using video cameras, loop detectors, ramp meters for interstate highway entrance ramps, variable message signs;
- Significant manufacturing and service industries;
- International airport with a hub for a regional carrier;
- Major downtown event planned for the "Millennium New Year";
- State/county/city government agencies have completed Y2K planning, testing, and remediation efforts and are executing a public awareness campaign; and
- Heavy precipitation is forecast.

Participants were asked to assume the roles of professionals within the fictional city and not as professionals within their home jurisdictions. This allowed participants to develop ideas and responses without considering any constraints placed by particular local rules or practices.

The following comments, made by participants during the session, illustrate this uncertainty:

"We think we are OK. Won't know until 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2000."

"I think we are on a satisfactory schedule but we don't know."

"We really don't know what we don't know."

"Major emphasis must now be placed on business contingency planning within and across departments."





A computer-aided group discussion tool was used to help capture ideas. This groupware provided each participant with a laptop workstation and access to notepads into which they provided responses based on a common set of triggering questions. Following entry of ideas, all participants reviewed responses of other participants and discussed interesting responses and findings.

III. Triggering Events

The participants were presented three events and asked a series of questions following the description of each event. The questions were designed to have participants consider the potential transportation-related impacts of Y2K and develop ideas regarding how to minimize or avoid those impacts. Following their responses, a discussion was conducted to probe for common and extraordinary practices and procedures.

EVENT ONE: Advance Warning from Asia of Y2K Problems

Time: Noon EST on December 31, 1999.

- *Airports and seaports in one major Asian city are shut down due to what appears to be a Y2K problem;*
- *The light rail system in another Asian city stops operating at midnight as a precautionary measure;*
- *A satellite communication network fails, and emergency (911) communications failures first appear in a third Asian county.*

The mayor of the fictional city has heard the reports from Asia on CNN and asks his staff whether the same problems are likely to occur in the fictional city.

Will the problems occur here?

Most participants agreed that the potential exists for similar problems to occur in the fictional city. However, they also expressed confidence that the effects would be minor. For example, one participant noted that "[w]e will have some minor problems, but we are ready. This is no worse than the ice storm we had last winter." Another participant said that "[w]e've thoroughly tested our systems. If they do fail, we have backup plans to implement to keep vital communications and transportation systems running." Similarly, another participant said that "[i]f something was missed and causes a problem, contingency plans are in place. We should be operational within 24 hours." At least one participant noted that a radio backup is in place to ensure 911 service.

A couple of participants noted the value of monitoring the situation in Asia as a means of predicting what could happen in the United States. "This will be a crucial 10-15 hour advance warning. Contingency plans should be ready to go at this point."

How will you obtain information to answer the mayor's question?

Participants indicated a number of information sources they would consult to answer the mayor's question, including:

- The city's chief Y2K coordinator;
- The state EMS/Y2K coordinator;
- City and county information technology directors;
- Various agencies within the region;
- The metropolitan council of governments;
- The transit system command post;
- The emergency operations center, which participants assumed was activated at 6 a.m. on December 31, 1999; and
- The local airport/seaport authority.

EVENT TWO: Y2K Morning

Time: 10 a.m. on January 1, 2000.

- *Rotating brownouts are disrupting power supplies across the city;*
- *Twenty-five percent of the city's traffic signals are flashing; and*
- *Electronic dispatch for police, fire, transportation, and rescue/ambulance service has failed.*

Assuming continuing transmission of TV service, the mayor will be interviewed on television in one hour and has asked staff to prepare him/her for the interview. The mayor has requested an assessment of the significance of each of the events, the potential transportation impacts, and the resources needed to respond. The mayor also has asked whether the events constitute an:

- immediate threat to public health and safety;
- a potential threat to public health and safety;
- a significant operational threat to one or more departments;
- a limited operational threat to one or more departments; or
- a minor inconvenience.

Most participants classified the electrical brownouts and failure of the electronic dispatching system as immediate or potential threats to health and public safety. Recommendations were made to deal with these problems, including:

- Use 2-way radios for dispatch of emergency vehicles;
- Relay detour and other information about traffic signal failures to the news media;
- Ensure that traffic officers are at critical intersections;
- Inform citizens that they should drive slowly and come to a full stop at any flashing red or blank signals;
- At-grade rail crossings should be checked to make sure they function correctly.

The failure of traffic signals was generally perceived as a less serious threat. As one participant noted: "We are ready to deal with traffic signal problems. Traffic officers will be dispatched to major intersections [and we will] ask the public to reduce their driving and treat the flashing red signals as stop signs." Most participants agreed, though, that congestion, delays, and the potential for crashes could increase as a result of signal failures. Participants also noted that light rail could be affected by the electrical failures, and bus service could be interrupted or delayed by the traffic signal problems.

Participants identified a variety of resources they would need to respond to these events, including:

- Cooperation/assistance from multiple power companies;
- Traffic signal technicians;
- Specialists who can determine whether the signal failures are Y2K-related or were caused by the electrical brownout;
- Transit police to check the system for stranded passengers;
- Operations personnel to restart the rail system once power is restored;
- Police officers to staff intersections and perform other functions as required;
- Emergency services personnel;
- Access to national guard personnel, if the problems persist;
- Cell phones, two-way radios, generators, and other back up equipment;
- Public information officers to respond to the media and keep the public informed;
- A system to ensure good coordination among all necessary staff;
- Firefighters to go to homes where people rely upon electricity for life support; and
- Funding to ensure that services can be restored and maintained.

EVENT THREE: Problems Persist on January 3, 2000.

Time: 6 a.m. on Monday, January 3, 2000.

- *The regional transportation management system has malfunctioned, causing major traffic problems;*
- *Travel information signs are displaying incorrect information;*
- *Freight and commuter trains are delayed;*
- *An ice/snow storm has begun; and*
- *Announcements were made over the weekend that the transportation system is operational.*

January 3 was selected because it is the first full working day of the Year 2000. Participants were asked to explain their contingency plan to keep the transportation system operating given the expected commuter and commercial demands on the transportation network. They were also asked to indicate how they would know if the plan was working and to indicate what they would do if the plan failed.



The participants agreed on key steps they would take to alleviate potential traffic problems. These include:

- Ask non-essential personnel to stay home or telecommute for the day to minimize demand and provide latitude for troubleshooting and remediation;
- Request non-government employers to take the same steps;
- Keep the public informed through broadcast announcements;
- Augment rail outages with bus service, wherever possible;
- Dispatch snow plows and other snow emergency vehicles;
- Close schools;
- Inform the public that Variable Message Signs (VMS) system may be inaccurate, and include notation on accurate messages that the sign is, in fact, functioning properly;
- Turn off VMS system if enough signs are malfunctioning;
- Ensure that all public safety personnel are fully aware of the situation; and
- Activate the emergency operations center.



Several participants indicated that their city or county had the authority to declare Monday, January 3, 2000 as a holiday in lieu of Friday, December 31, 1999. Some city councils and other local governmental bodies are actively considering the advantages/disadvantages of this holiday strategy. After careful review of all the factors involved, the Federal Government has decided to keep Friday, December 31, 1999 as the federal and banking system holiday.



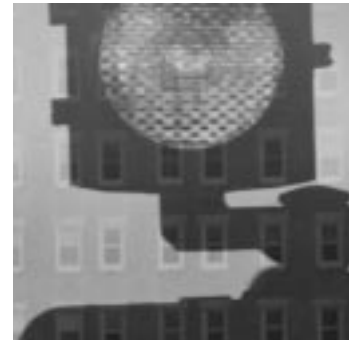
Participants indicated that they would know if the plan was working through public complaints, surveys of the traffic system, the news media, and feedback from field personnel, including police, traffic technicians and engineers, and transit and public works employees. Should the contingency plan fail, participants provided a number of alternative steps, including:

- Activate a back-up plan, if available;
- Evacuate rail system and buses;
- Ensure that operational buses have chains;
- Contact the governor to activate the national guard;
- Keep the public informed and ask them to stay at home;
- Ask businesses to close or delay opening;
- Minimize the use of single-occupant vehicles by encouraging car pooling; and
- Ensure that the emergency operations center is functioning.

IV. Identifying Y2K Vulnerabilities

After completing feedback on the scenario events, participants were asked to identify their greatest Y2K vulnerabilities to ensuring safe and efficient transportation over the Y2K weekend. Participants were asked to rank vulnerabilities as either "most critical," "critical," or "least critical" to ensuring safe and efficient transportation services. Participants also were asked to consider vulnerabilities in four key areas:

- **System Vulnerability:** ability to perform functions is dependent upon systems containing potentially Y2K non-compliant software.
- **Equipment Vulnerability:** ability to perform functions is dependent upon equipment containing potentially Y2K non-compliant embedded chips.
- **Supplier Vulnerability:** ability to perform functions is dependent upon the Y2K compliance of resource suppliers not under the control of the local and state government.
- **Process Vulnerability:** ability to perform functions and manage resources over the Y2K weekend is dependent upon coordination and information flow that could be impacted by the Y2K event or other externalities, such as holiday travel demand and leave plans.



Thirty-two vulnerabilities were identified during the session. In the "most critical" category, participants identified two supplier vulnerabilities—electricity and communications failures. Equipment, system, and process vulnerabilities were not identified as most critical.

Participants felt that the failure of electric power or communications capabilities could seriously affect their ability to maintain safe and efficient transportation services over the Y2K weekend. Concerns were expressed regarding emergency response capabilities, transit dispatch and communications services, light rail services, traffic management systems, and a variety of other components of the surface transportation system that rely upon electricity and telecommunications. As a result, participants identified close coordination with utility and communications companies as a high priority.

The "critical" category contained the greatest number of potential problems and included a mix of supplier, equipment, system, and process vulnerabilities. Most common among these were traffic signal failures, unavailability of fuel, poor multi-jurisdictional coordination, insufficient staff resources, and public panic. Participants felt that these items reinforced the need for contingency planning that includes back up plans for traffic management systems, good coordination among

jurisdictions and agencies, the provision of human and other resources during the new year weekend, and frequent communications with the public.

The "least critical" category contained a list of vulnerabilities and obstacles that participants believed would have a minimal impact on their ability to manage the Y2K weekend. These included failure of the Global Positioning System (GPS), unavailability of snow removal equipment, lawyers seeking to capitalize on Y2K problems, and lack of funding to handle Y2K-related problems. Participants felt that although these issues should be considered in the contingency planning process, they should not be given a high priority.

To develop a broader perspective on potential Y2K vulnerabilities, U.S. DOT examined Y2K vulnerabilities identified by the city of Los Angeles, CA. Although Los Angeles identified vulnerabilities for all city functions, and not just transportation, its results make an interesting comparison to the vulnerabilities identified by participants of the focus group.

Rather than the "most critical," "critical," and "least critical" classifications that were used in the May 12 session, Los Angeles grouped vulnerabilities into five general categories:

- Immediate threat to public/health safety;
- Potential threat to public health/safety;
- Significant operational threat to one or more departments/agencies;
- Limited operational threat to one or more departments/agencies or a revenue threat; and
- Minor inconvenience to departments/agencies or the private sector.

As did the focus group participants, Los Angeles ranked supplier vulnerabilities, particularly electrical and communications problems, as high priority vulnerabilities. For example, the city ranked inability to answer 911 calls and inability to dispatch units to life threatening events as "immediate threats to public health/safety." "Potential threats to public health/safety" included:

- Widespread failure of the sanitation system;
- Failure of the city radio system;
- Widespread power failure; and
- Failure of the water distribution system.

Transportation problems were identified primarily in the "significant operational threat" and "limited operational threat" categories. These categories also included financial issues which, although not discussed in the May 12 session, should clearly be considered by state and local governments in their planning processes. The



vulnerabilities identified in both significant and limited operational threat categories were:

- Inability to fuel vehicle fleet;
- Inability to perform vehicle maintenance;
- Inability to process departmental fund transfers;
- Inability to make timely payments on city's bond indebtedness;
- Inability to process payroll;
- Closure of city facilities not essential to public health and safety; and
- Failure of parking meters.

Finally, Los Angeles identified as a minor inconvenience delayed access to records not essential to public health and safety.

It is interesting to note that many of the vulnerabilities identified by participants during the May 12 session were not identified by the city of Los Angeles. These included traffic signal failures, poor coordination among agencies and jurisdictions, public panic, and staff unavailability. This does not suggest that these issues are not important. Rather, it may reflect the broader scope of the Los Angeles activity (which covered all city services and functions, not just transportation) and the extensive efforts and investment Los Angeles already has made to address Y2K issues.



V. Actions to Address Vulnerabilities

After identifying vulnerabilities, participants were asked to identify and rank actions that are "most likely," "likely," and "least likely" to ensure success in managing resources over the Y2K weekend to ensure safe and efficient transportation.

The majority of the "most likely" items focused on addressing the supplier and process vulnerabilities. Participants noted that governments should demand Y2K readiness and contingency plans from key suppliers (such as telephone, electricity, and paging services). Governments should insist that key suppliers work closely with government agencies to ensure no interruptions in critical services.

With regard to actions to address process vulnerabilities, participants felt strongly that government agencies must develop plans to ensure staff availability 24 hours per day between December 27 and January 3. Many participants noted that they already had canceled employee leave after December 15, 1999.

Many suggested that governments must clearly identify and divide Y2K responsibilities among departments and agencies. Governments must coordinate closely within jurisdictions and on a regional basis, and this coordination should be taking place now and continue until after the new year.

The greatest number of suggestions were made in the "somewhat likely" category and included suggestions to address supplier, equipment, system, and process vulnerabilities. These included:

- Establish a Y2K leave policy and consider allowing vacation leave to carry over to the next year, if vacation is denied because of Y2K;
- Establish a help desk for city employees to report Y2K problems;
- Use the 9/9/99 potential date problem as a dry-run/drill for Y2K;
- Keep staff informed and provide them answers for dealing with the public;
- Participate in command centers in other jurisdictions;
- Make sure information is multi-lingual;
- Create a "train the trainer" program to deal with the special needs of the elderly;
- Develop a "mobilization plan" to be implemented regardless of whether failures are reported; and
- Have emergency contracts with consultants/computer experts in place.

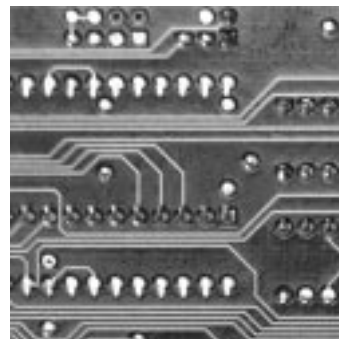
Among the suggestions that were rated "least likely" in ensuring successful Y2K management were declaring Monday, January 3 a state holiday and conducting an aerial survey the night of December 31.



VI. Building Public Confidence

In the last section of the exercise, participants were asked a series of questions designed to develop a better understanding of how to build and enhance public confidence regarding government preparedness for Y2K. In answering these questions, most participants focused on three issues:

- Preparation: Test all systems, repair where necessary, and validate that repairs were properly performed.
- Planning: Have a solid contingency plan and test the plan to ensure that key staff understand what needs to be done and who is responsible for particular functions and activities.
- Communication: Keep the public informed of preparation and planning activities through media events, press releases, web pages, bill stuffers, and other methods. Work closely with other jurisdictions and agencies.



Questions 1 & 2:

What have we learned that will help jurisdictions and agencies better manage the Y2K transition for transportation functions? Include comments about information, communication and collaboration.

What have we learned that will help jurisdictions and agencies do contingency planning for transportation functions better? Include comments about information, communication and collaboration.

The answers to these questions covered the three main themes of public confidence building: preparation, planning, and communication. Some participants indicated that similar exercises should continue to be held before the end of the year. The following points reflect the responses:

- Communications and planning are essential. Let the public know that transportation problems during Y2K can be handled.
- Contingency plans are essential.
- All systems must be tested prior to or during the last quarter of this year.
- This Y2K exercise has allowed us to share information, as well as learn from each other.
- It would be beneficial to meet again before the end of the year.
- Coordination is essential among jurisdictions and agencies.
- Contingency plans need to be widely communicated, as well as tested, throughout the agency.
- Joint representation at command centers is crucial.
- It is important for everyone to use the same words and definitions.

- It helps to communicate with other jurisdictions to see what they have done. Many things come up that we may not have considered.
- Activation of the emergency operations center (EOC) and managing this "event" as a "preplanned disaster" is a key to success, especially because this action promotes interagency communication.
- Officials must be open and honest about potential Y2K problems and solutions—no hidden agendas.
- Involve public information officers and attempt to establish a solid working relationship with the media to help get information out to the public.
- Ensure a clear understanding that there are no foolproof contingency plans.
- There must be collaboration—we need to work together—within our own regions and disciplines, and nationally.
- Demand contingency plans from other agencies and from critical suppliers/vendors (e.g. phones, power companies).
- We learned that nobody has all the answers and that it helps to communicate with each other for the benefit of all.

Question 3:

What is the single most important recommendation you would make to other local and state transportation agencies and authorities regarding the Y2K transition period?

The answer to this question also focused on preparation, planning, and communication. A few of the responses are included below.



- Test all computers in advance and either correct the problem or buy new computers.
- Know where embedded chips are located and correct or have contingency plans to do without.
- Be prepared to respond to unforeseen issues with assistance from the media. Use them in your favor—overplanning is better than underplanning.
- Have a tested contingency plan.
- External influences (electricity, communications, etc.) are critical and totally outside the control of transportation agencies. Someone should find out the regional status and share it with everyone to ensure all contingency plans are being built using the best data available.
- Activate your emergency operations center.
- The single most important thing is to work cooperatively and coordinate efforts. Make sure you have your trained staff—engineers, technicians and information technology staff—available during the Y2K "event" period.
- Demand an international effort to monitor Y2K issues and communicate clearly with everyone.

Question 4:

As public officials, how will you instill confidence in your community that the transportation system is operating in a safe and routine manner before, during and after the transition period? What will you tell them and how will you deliver the message?

In response to this question, the participants provided more specifics about their public communication plans and strategies. The responses focused on frequent, honest, and open communications, as well as providing the public with useful, practical information that will help citizens work through any Y2K problems. A few sample responses are provided below.

- Tell the public what has been done, who is working on solutions, how the city will manage the transition. Recently gave a one hour presentation to council that is now being repeated over and over on the city cable channel.
- Give the public tips for dealing with Y2K in their own lives.
- Hold well-publicized trial exercises, with honest feedback to the community via the media. Hold follow-up exercises to resolve problems with the first exercise and gain public acceptance of the process.
- Talk to the public. Tell them what's happening. Be honest, and open. Admit areas of concern, and make common-sense recommendations to citizens.



VII. Putting It All Together: A Y2K Weekend Checklist

At the end of the day, participants made it very clear that preparation, planning and public communication were the keys to success for managing the change. The need for contingency planning was repeatedly stressed, and most of the participants were already engaged in, or had completed, some level of contingency planning.

Some participants believed that state and local governments should go further than addressing their own Y2K issues. For example, a participant stated that state and local governments should demand contingency plans from other agencies and from critical suppliers and vendors, such as utility companies. Another participant stated that the status of critical suppliers and vendors should be established regionally so that the region's various contingency plans are built upon the same information. Here are examples of some specific things to do to prepare for the Y2K Weekend.

- Establish sources and mechanisms that can be employed to identify and communicate where and when problems arise. These sources can be tapped to provide status and condition reports even if no problems arise. For example, vehicle probes, manned by police, government staff, or taxi services can be used to identify system status and condition.
- Develop and test a business continuity and contingency plan (BCCP).
- Activate the local or state emergency operations center prior to the new year, which will ensure the availability of key staff.
- Coordinate and communicate among jurisdictions and agencies.
- Develop a way to monitor Y2K events internationally, because the new year occurs first in Asia, and these regions could provide a barometer of what to expect here.

The participants also had a number of specific recommendations regarding communicating with the public and building public confidence. These recommendations were derived from the belief that public perception will play an extremely important role in managing Y2K (e.g., "perception is reality"). Participants felt that the best way to avoid misperceptions about Y2K and its effects on the transportation system is to provide quality information as quickly as possible.

One of the keys to meeting this goal is to ensure that public affairs and other staff who might field questions from the public have complete and accurate information regarding Y2K issues and responses. This will require good coordination among agencies and jurisdictions and a clear understanding of how information should flow from the field back to the people who need it. It may also require finding inno-

**"Prepare, Prepare, Prepare."
"Communicate, Communicate,
Communicate."**

*Participants, Y2K Contingency
Planning and Public Confidence
Building Exercise
May 12, 1999*



“This Y2K exercise has allowed us to share information, as well as learn from each other.”

“This Y2K session reinforced that we need collaboration—within our own regions and disciplines, and nationally.”



vative ways to communicate.

The following are specific recommendations made by the participants regarding public communications:

- Communicate frequently, openly, and honestly with the public.
- Tell the public what is working well, what needs additional attention, and how the government plans to address the potential problem areas.
- Tell the public who is working on the problem and how the new year period will be managed.
- Provide tips for how citizens can prepare themselves for the new year.
- Manage the media and information flow by scheduling media events to demonstrate Y2K preparedness and distribute a constant stream of press releases.
- Educate employees about Y2K plans and actions.
- Make Y2K information available on a web page.
- Hold community meetings with seniors and others who rely heavily on public transportation.
- Provide public information in languages appropriate to your citizens.
- Involve civic organizations in personal preparedness.
- Develop frequently asked questions (FAQs) and update them frequently.
- Put Y2K information in water and sewer bills and other regular government mailings.
- Start to develop a good working relationship with the media on Y2K issues.

For Further Information

ASSOCIATION WEB SITES

Access Local Government. <http://www.algov.org>

An on-line information service exclusively for local officials, is building a Year 2000 section as part of a national campaign sponsored jointly by PTI, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and the International City/County Management Association.

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). <http://www.aashto.org>

Federal Highway Administration. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/y2k>

Federal Highway Administration and the Year 2000 Computer Problem

Institute of Transportation Engineers. <http://www.ite.org/>

ITS America Information Clearinghouse. <http://www.itsa.org/home.nsf>

Public Technology, Inc. <http://pti.nw.dc.us/y2k>

Urban Mobility. <http://www.mobility-net.com/forum>

A forum for transportation professionals to discuss Y2K problems.

U.S. DOT. <http://www.y2ktransport.dot.gov/>

Williams, Mullin, Christian & Dobbins. <http://www.Y2K.com>

Sponsored by a law firm with offices in Richmond, Va., and Washington, D.C., this site provides legal resources for avoiding year 2000 disruptions and reducing litigation exposure.

The Year 2000 Information Center. <http://www.year2000.com>

This premiere Year 2000 Web site offers a wide range of information on the problem, its effects, and its solution.





STATE WEB SITES

Alabama. <http://agencies.state.al.us/Y2K/index.html>

Alaska. <http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/y2000/index.htm>

Arkansas. <http://www.dis.state.ar.us/y2k/y2kintro.htm>

California. <http://www.year2000.ca.gov>

Connecticut. <http://www.doit.state.ct.us/y2k>

Florida. <http://www.y2k.state.fl.us/>

Idaho. <http://www2.state.id.us/itrmc/2k/default.htm>

Iowa. <http://www.state.ia.us/government/its/century>

Massachusetts. <http://www.state.ma.us/dls/year2k.htm>

Minnesota. <http://www.state.mn.us/ebranch/admin/ipo/2000/2000.html>

Nebraska. http://www.das.state.ne.us/das_cdp/rfp/rfp.htm

New Jersey. <http://www.state.nj.us/cio/nj2000.htm>

New York. <http://www.irm.state.ny.us/yr2000/yr2000.htm>

Ohio. <http://www.state.oh.us/y2k/>

Oregon. <http://y2k.das.state.or.us/>

Pennsylvania. <http://www.pa2k.org/>

Tennessee. <http://www.state.tn.us/finance/oir/y2k/webindex.html>

Texas. <http://www.state.tx.us/y2k>

Utah. <http://www.das.state.ut.us/year2000/index.htm>

Virginia. <http://www.cdci.state.va.us/>

Washington. <http://www.wa.gov/dis/2000/y2000.htm>

Wisconsin. <http://badger.state.wi.us>

Public Technology, Inc.

1301 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20004

Phone: 202/ 626-2400

Fax: 202/ 626-2498

Website: <http://pti.nw.dc.us>

Public Technology, Inc. (PTI) is
the non-profit technology organi-
zation for local governments.

PTI's mission is to advance the
development and use of technol-
ogy in local government.

